Current Reading Research and Its Application in the Classroom

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In 1997, United States Congress

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development & U.S. Department of Education

Report of the National Reading Panel

2000
National Institute for Literacy, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development & U.S. Department of Education

Reading Research Working Group, a panel of experts on adult reading research and practice

Research-Based Principles Report 2002
ABE Reading Research

• Uses appropriate K-12 research from the NRP to fill in gaps in adult literature
• Emerging principles and trends rather than definitive principles due to lack of research
• Our best picture to date
Text Comprehension

Vocabulary

Knowledge

Strategies

Fluency

Decoding

Phonemic Awareness
What do we know about words?

Knowing a word is not an all or nothing proposition; it is not the case that one either knows or does not know a word. Rather, knowledge of a word should be viewed in terms of the extent or degree of knowledge that people can possess.

Beck & McKeown, 1991
Levels of Word Knowledge

• **Unknown**: meaning is completely unfamiliar (gauge)

• **Acquainted**: basic meaning is recognized, after some thought (yardstick)

• **Established**: meaning is easily, rapidly, and automatically recognized (ruler)

Beck, McKeown, & Omanson, 1987
Types of Vocabulary

- **Listening**: all the words a person hears and understands
- **Speaking**: all the words a person uses in ordinary speech
- **Reading**: the words in print that a person recognizes and is able to figure out
- **Writing**: the words a person can use appropriately in his or her own writing
Types of Vocabulary

- Listening
- Speaking
  - RECEPTIVE vocabulary
- Reading
  - EXPRESSIVE vocabulary
- Writing
Morpheme

- Smallest unit of meaning in language
- *Free morphemes* can stand alone
- *Bound morphemes* are used only in combinations with other morphemes
Morphographs

- The **written** form of a morpheme
- A group of **letters** (aside from whole words) that carries unique meaning
- A morphograph represents a specific letter-meaning relationship
- Familiarity with morphographs aids in spelling, reading, and making sense of difficult words
Morphographs

- Morphology
- Metamorphosis
- Isomorphic
- Phoneme
- Grapheme
Vocabulary and Adults

- ABE readers’ vocabulary growth is likely dependent on reading ability.
- Although longer life experiences may initially give them an advantage at lower reading levels, this advantage disappears in more difficult texts.

Krudenier, 2002
Knowledge

- Prior knowledge from experience and prior reading
- Text Structures
- Words
- Knowing when to apply what you know
Text Comprehension Strategies

• Active engagement and thinking before, during, and after reading
• Self-monitoring
• Fix-up strategies
• Motivation
Comprehension Strategies and Adults

ABE readers have poor functional literacy comprehension. They may be able to recall simple information or locate information in a simple text, but be unable to integrate and synthesize information from longer or more complex texts.

Krudenier, 2002
Comprehension Strategies and Adults

ABE readers’ knowledge and use of metacognition are similar to beginning readers:

– Less aware of strategies for monitoring comprehension
– View reading as decoding rather than comprehending
– Less aware of text structure
– Aware of influence of motivation and interest on reading

Krudenier, 2002
What is Reading Fluency?

Accuracy
Rate
Prosody
Why is fluency important?

“The most compelling reason to focus instructional efforts to ensure that all students become fluent readers is the strong correlation between reading fluency and reading comprehension.”

Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, in press
Why is fluency important?

Each aspect of fluency has a clear connection to text comprehension.

• Without **accurate** word reading, the reader will have no access to the author’s intended meaning, possibly leading to misinterpretations of the text.

• Poor **automaticity** in word reading or slow, laborious movement through the text taxes the reader’s capacity to construct an ongoing interpretation of the text.

• Poor **prosody** can lead to confusion through inappropriate or meaningless groupings of words or through inappropriate applications of expression.

Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, in press
Reasons for Poor Fluency

- lack of exposure to fluent models
- focus on figuring out words, lack of attention to meaning
- frustration
- missing the “why” of reading
- lack of practice time

Blevins (2002)
What Fluent Readers Need to Learn

• How to decode words (in isolation and in connected text)

• How to automatically recognize words (accurately and quickly with little attention or effort)

• How to increase speed (or rate) of reading while maintaining accuracy
Reading Fluency and Adults

• Reading fluency is a large problem among all levels of ABE readers
• Adult beginning readers have fluency levels and characteristics similar to children matched for reading age
• Repeated readings have been used to increase the reading fluency of low-literacy adults

Krudenier, 2002
Understanding of the Alphabetic Principle

- Readers must develop the fundamental insight that letters and sounds work together in systematic ways to form words.
- This understanding provides the foundation for the development of decoding skills.
- As readers get into more complex words, they also need to understand the role meaning plays.
Alphabetic Principle and Adults

- Adult beginning readers, like all beginners, have difficulty using letter-sound knowledge to decode unfamiliar words.
- Adult beginning readers tend to have better skill at recognizing sight words than reading-matched children.
- Direct, explicit instruction is effective in increasing the word analysis abilities of adult beginning readers.

Krudenier, 2002
Phonological Awareness

• The conscious awareness of or sensitivity to the sound structure of language.

• Includes the ability to detect, match, blend, segment, or otherwise manipulate the sounds units of spoken language.
Why is phonemic awareness important?

- PA is directly related to reading ability.
- Although the relationship is reciprocal, PA precedes skilled decoding.
- PA is a reliable predictor of later reading ability.
- Deficits in PA are usually associated with deficits in reading.
- Improvements in PA can and usually do result in improvements in reading ability.
Phonemic Awareness and Adults

- Adult nonreaders have virtually no phonemic awareness
- Adult beginning readers, like all beginners, have little phonemic awareness
- PA increases with reading development and skill
- PA instruction should involve letters rather than simply oral instruction

Krudenier, 2002
Five Instructional Components of Reading

- Phonemic Awareness
  - Identifying words accurately and automatically
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Text Comprehension strategies
  - Constructing meaning using words that are identified
So what does this research mean for classroom instruction?
Improving Vocabulary Knowledge
Independent Word Learning Strategies

Skilled reading…depends not just on knowing a large number of words, but also on being able to deal effectively with new ones. Skilled readers…are readers who cope effectively with words that are new to them.

(Nagy et al., 1994)

To promote large-scale, long-term vocabulary growth, teachers must aim at increasing students’ incidental word learning.

(Nagy, 1988)
Independent Word Learning Strategies

Three Critical Questions:

- Do I know any other words that look and sound like this word?
- Are any of these look-alike/sound-alike words related to each other?
- What do the words I know tell me about this word?

Adapted from Cunningham, 1998
Nifty Thrifty Fifty

• Words designed for readers to use in order to figure out the meaning and spelling of unknown words as well as how to read them.
• Most frequent and useful prefixes and suffixes in English to provide “transferable chunks”
• Using the word parts in this list, can read, spell, and understand more than 800 other words.
• Think of them as keys that will unlock a larger corpus of words.

Cunningham, 1998
Nifty Thrifty Fifty

For example:

- If the unknown word is *antibiotic*, the first question is: Do I know any other words that look and sound like this word?
  - antifreeze, antiaircraft, anti-terrorism
  - prehistoric, biology, biographical
- Are these words related to *antibiotic*?
- What do they tell me about *antibiotic*?

Cunningham, 1998
Nifty Thrifty Fifty

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• What do they tell me about *antibiotic*?

  Cunningham, 1998
Improving Reading Accuracy
Multisyllabic Words

Readers need to know:

– what a syllable is;
– that a syllable contains one vowel sound;
– that recognizable word parts are also in multisyllabic words;
– how to divide the words in parts;
– how to integrate the morphosyntactic and graphophonetic information to read each part and blend it into a real word;
– how to be flexible with word parts that are irregular.
DISSECT Word Identification Strategy for Multisyllabic Words (Lenz & Hughes, 1990)

- This strategy, developed at the University of Kansas, provides challenged readers with a functional and efficient strategy to successfully decode and identify unknown words in their reading materials.

- The strategy is based on the premise that most words in the English language can be pronounced by identifying prefixes, suffixes, and stems, and syllabication rules.

- Lenz and Hughes (1990) recommend that the strategy be fully employed only for those words that are most critical to understanding a passage of text.

- Bryant, Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, Ugel, Hamff, & Hougen (2000) note that this strategy works best when the word being analyzed is one that is already in the student’s listening vocabulary.
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 1: Discover the context.
This step requires the student to skip over the unknown word and read to the end of the sentence. Then, the student uses the apparent meaning of the sentence to guess what word might best fit. If the guess does not match the unknown word, the student moves on to the next step.

The first step to avoiding reading underachievement is to study harder.

The first step to avoiding reading is to study harder.
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 2: Isolate the prefix.
In this step, students look for a pronounceable sequence of letters at the beginning of the word. Students are taught a list of prefixes to facilitate recognition. If a prefix is identified, the student draws a box around it to separate it visually from the rest of the word.

underachievement
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 3: Separate the suffix.
Using a procedure similar to Step 2, the student boxes off the suffix, if there is one.

under achieve ment
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 4: **Say the stem.**

The student attempts to pronounce the stem and then blend it with the prefix and suffix into the whole word. If the stem cannot be named, the student moves on to Step 5.

**under** achieve **ment**
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 5: **Examine the stem.**
In this step, the student divides the stem into small, pronounceable word parts and reads it. After reading the stem, the student blends all word parts together and reads the entire word.

**under** achieve **ment**
DISSECT Word Identification
Strategy for Multisyllabic Words

Step 6: Check with someone.
If needed, the student checks with a teacher, parent, or other person to make sure he or she is right.

Step 7: Try the dictionary.
If still unsure, the student looks up the word, uses pronunciation information to pronounce the word, and, if the word is unfamiliar, reads the definition.
Improving
Reading Rate
Timed Repeated Readings

• Connected text for timed repeated readings can come from anywhere. As long as it is interesting to the student and at the right reading level, you can use it.

• Good ideas for older students are nonfiction passages, articles from popular magazines, *Sports Illustrated*, or *Chicken Soup for the Soul*—whatever is interesting and motivating to the student.
To conduct timed readings, follow these steps:

4. Instructor Records
   The instructor circles all errors on the instructor's copy of the page with a dry erase marker or wipe-off pen OR counts the errors. In addition, the instructor offers the correct pronunciations during the timed reading.

5. Record Data
   The instructor or student accurately records all data on the student's Progress Charts.

6. Review
   The instructor and student review the student's performance on the task, correcting errors and practicing the correct pronunciation of sounds and words. Students should be encouraged for the progress they have made and set a goal for the next attempt.
Great Leaps Reading

Great Leaps is a supplemental program designed to increase rate and accuracy

- Phonics
- Sight Phrases
- Stories
- Immediate Feedback
- Progress Monitoring

www.GreatLeaps.com
Jamestown Timed Readings Plus

- Reading levels 4-12+ and interest levels 6-12+
- Pairs a nonfiction passage with a related fiction passage
- Builds prior knowledge
- Includes comprehension questions
- Also available with a science focus

www.glencoe.com
What the research says…

A meta-analysis of repeated readings among K-12 students found that these elements are critical for success:

- All students should read passages to an adult (ES=1.37) rather than a peer (ES=.36)
- Before reading, instructors should provide a cue to focus on both reading quickly and comprehension.
- Instructors should provide direct corrective feedback after every session.
- Students should read until they reach a rate and accuracy criterion (ES=1.78) rather than a set number of times (ES=.38)

Therrien (2004)
Your efforts are part of a larger world-wide effort on behalf of adults with low literacy...

The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) aims to extend the use of literacy to those who do not currently have access to it—over 861 million adults and over 113 million children world-wide.

Literacy for all:
Voice for all, learning for all.

UNESCO, 2005
Your efforts are part of a larger world-wide effort on behalf of adults with low literacy...

The Decade will focus on the needs of adults with the goal that people everywhere should be able to use literacy to communicate within their own community, in the wider society, and beyond.

**Literacy as freedom.**

UNESCO, 2005
References and Resources

• Baumann, J.F., & Kame’enui, E.J. (2004). *Vocabulary Instruction : Research to Practice (Solving Problems In Teaching Of Literacy)*. The Guilford Press.


THANK YOU!

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